salinity tolerant crops; technology for de-salinisation; use of remote sensing in natural resource management; application of computer system in agriculture for technology transfer in extension services; etc.

The Congress also had a Statellite Symposium on Agrobiodiversity Conservation which recommended harmonization of plant breeders' rights and farmers' rights which will facilitate an equitable sharing of benefits of plant genetic resources as well as seeds of modern varieties.

Frequent Postponement of National Games

2261. SHRI K. RAHMAN KHAN: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the reasons for postponing the National Games frequently;

(b) whether frequent postponement of the Games will not reflect the incapability of the country to hold National Games; and

(c) whether Government will take-up with Government of Karnataka for its failure to hold the National Games?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS AND SPORTS DM THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R. DHANUSHKODI ATHITHAN): (a) The National games are allotted to states by the Indian Olympic Association. The decision to postpone the National Games scheduled to be held in the State of Karnataka has been taken by the Indian Olympic Association in consultation with the Karnataka Government and the State Olympic Association due to non readiness of the necessary infrastructure for holding the games as per international norms. The Govt. of Karnataka have informed that their efforts for mobilisation of funds from sponsors had not yielded results necessitating the postponement of the Games.

(b) No, Sir.

(c) Since the Central Government was not a party to the decision to hold the National Games in Karnataka, it is not possible to intervene in this matter.

Expenditure on advertisements by Railways

2262. SHRI SURESH PACHOURI: Will the Minister of RAILWAYS be pleased to state: (a) the amount spent by the Railways on advertisements in the national dailies regarding inauguration of gauge conversion projects and other Railway functions during the last six months;

(b) whether this expenditure was necessary keeping in view the resource crunch being faced by the Railways; and

(c) the justification for one page advertisement in various newspapers?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RAILWAYS (SHRI SATPAL MAHARAJ): (a) The total amount spent by the Railways on advertisements for publicity of various railway schemes and projects during the current financial year is Rs. 3,32,89,633 approx.

(b) Railways is the singular organisation in the country with the largest public interface. New projects in Railways like gauge conversion, introduction of new trains, etc. have relevance far beyond mere rail transportation as the potential factors affecting the socio economic life of the people. It is therefore considered imperative to disseminate such information to people at large in order to enlighten them on the possible impact on their socio-economic life as a result of these projects for exploiting the emerging opportunities. While the control on advertisement in Railways is kept within the budget allocations the relevance of such advertisement is considered essential for an organisation that touches the people's life in more ways than one.

(c) One page advertisements in newspapers in normally limited to only major events/ projects having national relevance and in such cases proper care is taken to restrict the number of the publications so as to keep the expenditure within the available funds.

Non-utilisation of Sports funds by States and U.Ts

2263. SHRI O.P. KOHLI: Will the Minister of HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem captioned "Sports Policy is adrift, with no accountability" published in the "Times of India", dated 19.11.96.

(b) if so, the facts thereof;

(c) the reaction of Government thereto; and

(d) the details of the States and Union Territories and other organisations that have failed to fully utilise the funds given to them for the promotion of games and sports?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE DEPARTMENT OF YOUTH AFFAIRS & SPORTS IN THE MINISTRY OF HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT (SHRI R DHANUSHKODI ATHITHAN); (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) The news item deals generally with the alleged ills of sports management in the country.

(c) The Govt. is aware of the need to have accountability in sports management and co-ordinated approach by all Sports Developmental agencies. There is already a proposal to reformulate the existing National Sports Policy to make it result oriented.

(d) Sports is on the State list and as such funds for development of sports, in general, are provided by the State Govts. themselves. The Central Government, however, gives matching financial assistance to States/UTs for creation of Sports infrastructure. The first instalment of the Central Share amounting to 90% of the approved Central assistance is released only after the States/UTs have already incurred expenditure to the extent of there own share and the remaining 10% is released on completion of the project thus ensuring proper utilisation of the Central assistance.

Newsitem captioned "Gangotri is receding"

2264. SHRI JANARDHANA POOJARY: Will the Minister of ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government's attention has been drawn to the newsitem published in "The Hindustan Times" dated 10th November, 1996 under the caption "Gangotri is receding" wherein it has been stated that if the global temperature increase of 0.5 degrees C stabilises, the Gangotri glacier will recede further and there will be less water;

(b) whether Government are aware that the tourism and the dhabas are also responsible for polluting the climate and increasing heat; and

(c) if so, the measures Government proposes to take to restrict tourism around Gangotri?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF ENVIRONMENT AND FORESTS (CAPT. JAI NARAIN PRASAD NISHAD): (a)Yes, Sir. According to the Second Assessment Report entitled "Climate Change 1995—Impacts, Adaptations and Mitigation of Climate Change" brought out by the Inter-Govermental Panel on Climate Change, vulnerability of most mountain regions to a warmer climate is projected. There are, however, uncertainties associated with the projections on the regional impacts due to poor data coverage.

(b) and (c) The Government is aware of the environmental concerns and has supported conservation activities in the Gangotri region for setting up of nurseries, plantation of trees, dhaba (lodge) modernisation, establishment of community toilets, removal of garbage etc. The Deptt. of Tourism has constituted a Himalayan TourismAdvisory Board (HIMTAB) which has evolved guidelines for developing ecotourism.

आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान कृषि-उत्पादन में वृद्धि

2265. श्री राम जेठमलानी: क्या कृषि मंत्री यह बताने की कृपा करेंगे कि:

(क) क्या सरकार ने आठवीं पंचवर्षीय योजना के दौरान कृषि-उत्पादन में वृद्धि की वार्षिक-दर का अनुमान लगाया है;

(ख) यदि हां, तो तत्संबंधी ब्यौरा क्या है;

(ग) क्या यह सच है कि देश में कृषि उत्पादन की वृद्धि दर के कम होने के कारण कृषि उत्पादों की उत्पादन लागत में वृद्धि हुई है;

(घ) यदि नहीं, तो सरकार की इस पर क्या प्रतिक्रिया है;